

# The Arts: A Support for Reading



Carol King and Emily MacGillivray



This resource has been made possible through the generous donations of private individuals, foundations, and corporations who support The Curriculum Foundation, the charitable arm of Curriculum Services Canada. For more details, visit [www.curriculum.org](http://www.curriculum.org) and select “Grants for Teachers.”

# Contents

**Introduction** .....p. 1

## **Drama Structures**

**Introduction Activities** .....p. 4

Drama Games  
Improvisation  
Movement  
Simple Tableaux  
Soundscapes  
Choral Speech

**Curriculum Connections** .....p. 19

Visualization  
In-Role  
Writing-in-Role  
Variations on Tableaux  
Soundscapes  
Choral Speech  
Objects of Character  
Corridor of Voices  
Interviews and Hot-Seating  
Mantle of the Expert  
Using Masks  
Movement Adaptations  
Ceremonies

## **Visual Art Techniques**

**Introduction to Visual Techniques** .....p. 43

Colour  
Collage  
Modelling  
Simple Masks

**Curriculum Connections** .....p. 51

Modelling with a Purpose  
Mask Making  
Creating Artifacts  
Mixed-Media Collage  
Drawing Visualizations of Text  
Using Colour to Reflect Understanding

**Assessment Tools** .....p. 61

Sample Checklist for Tableau  
Sample Self-Assessment for Student-in-Role  
Sample Peer Feedback for a Neutral Mask Presentation

**Resources** .....p. 64

## Introduction

*The Arts: A Support for Reading* provides a variety of specific drama structures and visual art techniques that teachers can use to help their students become more proficient readers.

Students who participate in specific drama and visual art activities related to curriculum content, are often better able to express their understanding of the concepts. The activities in this resource give students a chance to demonstrate their learning in new and different ways.

This resource provides strategies for teachers to use drama and art in their core curriculum classes. It offers a repertoire of simple, effective drama structures and visual art techniques, for using the arts as a teaching tool to develop, reinforce, and model curriculum concepts.

## Connections Across the Curriculum

Samples of ways for using drama and visual art to engage students in reading, writing, oral language, and critical thinking:

<b>Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use visualization and colour activities to help students infer, predict, and make connections to text and content, e.g., to predict why a character in a novel might choose a particular course of action; to connect emotionally with sailors setting out on voyages of exploration.</li><li>• Use elements of design to create two- and three-dimensional works of art to communicate thoughts, feelings, and ideas about text, e.g., create models of living quarters in the Klondike; use drawing to help visualize text.</li></ul>
<b>Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use writing-in-role to help develop a sense of voice, e.g., write as the protagonist in a novel about to make a difficult decision; write as a sailor accompanying Cartier on his first voyage to Canada.</li><li>• Use writing-in-role to explore a variety of writing styles, e.g., a diary entry of a <i>Fille du Roi</i>; a letter from a minor character in a novel about a major event.</li></ul>
<b>Oral Language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use improvisation, choral speech, and soundscapes to define, underline, or create settings and situations encountered in text, e.g., to vocalize the thoughts of a series of characters during a moment of conflict in a story; to create the sounds heard during a storm at sea.</li></ul>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use solo and group drama activities to develop skills in problem solving, maintaining focus and concentration, and evaluating the solutions.</li><li>• Provide evidence for the interpretations of personal experiences and events of social significance which have been presented through drama.</li></ul>

## Context

The activities in this resource are more meaningful when integrated with the content being taught. Provide students with opportunities to practise drama and visual arts skills. Allow some time, as part of Language Arts to introduce drama structures, and as part of Visual Art classes to introduce specific art techniques. Students then transfer and apply this knowledge to other contexts.

For students to be able to use these skills effectively, especially in drama situations, a level of trust needs to be established in the class room. By beginning with the introductory activities, and using them as regular, fun activities in your daily routine, students should become more open to exploring new ways to express their understanding of text and subject content.

Students can experience a single piece of text through connecting a variety of drama processes and visual art techniques. Connecting drama and art activities addresses multiple learning styles, giving students more opportunities to experience success in their learning.

Some of the books referenced within this resource were chosen because they contain content which challenges and questions. They deal with serious topics, e.g., bullying, child labour, homelessness, civil rights, and war, among others. However, not all the texts mentioned are serious. They are all appropriate choices for drama and art activities because the narrative is complex or interesting enough that students can ‘enter’ the story and participate in multiple ways. Once students have used single drama or art activities with fiction, they become comfortable deciding on and judging which texts will work best to connect activities, and which activities work best in a specific text.

Connecting activities can be used equally effectively with non-fiction contexts. Social studies, history, or science curricula include topics which could be taught through a series of connected drama and art activities. A subject such as math can also lend itself to drama and art concepts and there are a number of appropriate picture books on numerous math topics. For those students who are not ‘logical-mathematical’ learners, the use of drama and art can help cement abstract concepts.

Before attempting to connect activities, students should have developed a familiarity and comfort level with similar activities in other settings.

An example of how connecting a series of different drama processes and art techniques could help with students’ understanding of a single fiction text:

Students:

- create tableaux which portray text meaning and subtext;
- use colour activities to symbolize character and emotion;
- participate in role-play to explore plot developments;
- use role-play experiences to write-in-role, developing and demonstrating understanding of character;
- use movement concepts and mask work to express emotions felt by characters;
- experiment with ways to present text and interpret meaning through choral speech.

## Differentiated Instruction

The activities in this resource are intended to help all students learn concepts and demonstrate their learning of curriculum content.

Students who have difficulties relating to what they have read may not have had opportunities to explore alternate ways to express their understanding. Students who are visual, kinesthetic, and/or oral learners may have had limited opportunities using the learning styles most comfortable to them. Students who lack background knowledge or who have not acquired the needed skill sets may be unable to infer, visualize, and make connections with what they have read. Suggestions are offered throughout the resource to help teachers find ways to adapt activities for all students.

## About Assessment

Not every performance or art experience needs to be formally assessed. In many instances, informal assessment through discussions, debriefing sessions, and one-on-one meetings are adequate to check that student understanding is taking place. Suggestions called **What to Look For** are included in this resource.

Students need chances to practise, polish, and improve their work with feedback from the teacher and from their peers and self-assessment, before final assessment takes place. Sample assessment tools are included in this resource. Teachers can adapt these models to suit their assessment purposes.

## Drama Structures – Introductory Activities

### Drama Games

Short introductory drama games engage students in non-threatening, non-judgmental ways. Drama games help students feel comfortable with the various aspects of drama. The games introduce interpersonal and physical skills that can be applied to other situations and help students focus on the theme or topic of the lesson. Through drama, students develop confidence in their abilities to work cooperatively and collaboratively with others. They learn how to control their bodies, model situations and events, and build on previously introduced themes and content to express themselves in non-verbal ways.

### Examples

#### Atom

Atom is based on the concept that different numbers of ‘atoms’ form together to create ‘molecules.’ Each student represents an atom and creates ‘a molecule’ with other students as the teacher calls out the number of atoms in each molecule, e.g., ‘Atom 3.’ With the exception of Atom 1, student molecules are formed by having at least two body parts touching. When forming molecules of three or more atoms, each atom must connect with at least two other atoms. Give examples of connecting, e.g., an elbow and a knee could touch; a finger and the toe on the left shoe could touch. Any ‘left-over atoms’ become “free radicals” and strike an independent, noble pose to which they will return every time that number is called.

Each time a number is called again, students quickly and safely return to the exact place in the room they were the first time the number was called and recreate the original molecule in exactly the same shape with the same people. Students may not discuss with partners what form the atom should take, but rather respond spontaneously.

The teacher calls various combinations of atoms ending with “Whole Group Atom.” Students should self-check that they are returning to the original place; are posing with the same partners; and are in the same structure/pose each time.

### Notes

#### What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate cooperative and collaborative behaviours;
- concentrate during the completion of an activity, and control their body movements;
- create appropriate poses and demonstrate character in freezes when portraying a character or developing a role.

## Notes

Debrief this activity by asking students to comment on what was fun about the game and what was difficult. Lead the discussion towards the idea that in drama, one of the things to learn is how to remember what was done, and exactly how it was done. Students provide feedback about strategies they used to remember their freezes.

### Teapot

Students may find this game more difficult than the Atom game because their bodies need to be placed representatively. Instead of forming random molecules, students depict an object or action. For example, when the teacher calls “Atom 2 Teapot,” the two atoms create their interpretation of a teapot with both participants depicting part of the teapot.

Examples of scenarios to use are specific nouns or activities, e.g., rowing a boat, with someone as the boat, the oar, and the rower; or places, e.g., waiting for luggage at the airport. As in Atom, students cannot discuss their ‘teapots,’ but must build them spontaneously. Situations can be made more complicated and problematic as the students become more used to thinking quickly and working cooperatively.

Students work through several situations, then debrief.

### Thematic Teapot

Choose a theme relating to a current unit of study, or a text. When calling the Atoms, include a scenario for students to recreate. For example, when working with the picture book *Where Poppies Grow* by Linda Granfield, examples might include “Atom 1, practising your salute” or “Atom 3, enjoying a joke with the other soldiers in the mess hall.”

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students with a sight disability can work with a partner as a single unit.
- Students with mobility problems can be allowed extra time to return to original starting places.
- English language learners join in after watching for the first few Atoms.
- Where cultural or religious practices do not permit physical contact between genders, students can work in homogenous groups.

“what’s happening?” If

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- English language learners may require more time to process the language before taking part in the activity.

### **Improvisation**

Improvisation, a vital component of role-play, is an important dramatic skill. Improvisational activities are chosen by the students or the teacher. Students work together and actively create a scene, using both movement and dialogue.

Improvisations give students an opportunity to control where the drama is going. Students find it rewarding to experience what it means to direct a course of action.

Students work spontaneously with others to create and define a given situation, using words and movements. They develop trust in themselves to create drama situations, and in their classmates to depend on them to support the narrative.

Students work together to solve problems, make decisions, and respond to the actions of others in a group. They become aware of both verbal and nonverbal stimuli from the other students in the group. They learn to think on their feet, stay in-role, and include each student as an important member of the group. There is no right or wrong ‘script’ in improvisation, which provides an environment that is comfortable, safe, and accepted. An important skill for students to learn is how to accept and work with whatever comes up in the improvisation. For example, if one student improvises the line, “Where on earth did you get that elephant in your bedroom?” a response needs to acknowledge that there is, indeed, an actual elephant in the bedroom, with the conversation carrying on from there.

Students debrief at the end of the improvisation sessions, telling what was difficult/easy/complicated/challenging about the scenarios in which they participated. Allow time for students to verbalize strategies for improvement, as well as to ‘replay’ scenes they would like to improve. Throughout the activity, remind students that in improvisation, the actors must accept every suggestion that is offered and work with whatever is presented to them.

Students should have sufficient time to explore and enjoy the improvisation process. If students are having difficulty with the improvisation, stop the action and have them talk about

students get off course, redirect them with a new focus.

## Notes

Improvisation activities are not 'skits.' In a skit, students control the direction of the story; in improvisation, the teacher, from outside the action, directs the action.

## What to Look For

Students:

- should all be a part of the story;
- should participate in the spontaneously created story, e.g., they do not halt the narrative;
- speak and move in-character. They eventually use props or other introduced prompts, fitting them into the story;
- demonstrate the ability to concentrate throughout a sustained performance.

## Examples

### Typewriter

Groups of five or six students each respond to the narrator's instructions. The narrator begins the story by setting the scene, e.g., "Once upon a time there was a young girl..." One of the students in the class steps into role as that character, initially through mimed actions, but eventually adding dialogue.

The narrator continues telling the story, with other students joining the narrative, contributing with actions. Eventually, participants change the direction of the drama by speaking in-role as their character. The narrator redirects the drama if it takes an unacceptable turn. This activity allows the students to take on as much of the action as they feel comfortable with.

### Step On Up

In groups of two or three, students 'take over' a narrative as they role-play simple situation, e.g., standing in line waiting for a bus and making conversation with others in the line. At some point in the

improvisation, the cast freezes in position, another student steps into the scene, takes one of the other student's place, and carries on the story.

Repeat the process, with students stepping in and replacing each other as the improvisation continues.

As students become more comfortable with improvisation, they can generate original scenarios for others to role play.

### **Variation**

The student 'stepping in' completely changes the situation through improvised movement and dialogue, e.g., instead of stepping into the bus line, the replacement actor leads the improvisation into watching a horse race. The other actors pick up the cue and take the improvisation into an entirely new story. These improvisations can turn and change as often as a new actor replaces a classmate.

### **Mystery Line**

In groups of four or five, students improvise a short scene based on a line or phrase which they have been given or which has been chosen randomly from a piece of text. To heighten the complexity, each student can be given a distinct character with which to work.

## **Notes**

## Movement

Movement involves short, improvisational, coordinated dance-like sequences. Movement activities can be used to depict events, sequences, and emotions introduced through text.

Teachers do not need formal dance training to teach movement, as movement at this level is not formally choreographed. As teachers begin to work with students unfamiliar with dance, they should refer to “moving in an organized and coordinated way” rather than to dance.

Before beginning any movement activities, discuss with students ways in which people can create movement and form with their bodies. These include:

**shape:** what the performer’s body is doing to communicate meaning or emotion, e.g., creating a shape using the whole body or part of it; stretching, curving, twisting, using angular forms or rounded ones; using symmetry or asymmetry in aligning the sides of the body; using different levels to others in the group (high, medium, low); exploring balance issues

**space:** how the dancer makes use of personal space, interacts with others in the group, and makes use of the performance area, e.g., considering various formations for presentation such as straight lines, semi circular and circular arrangements; moving between levels, individually and in groups; creating symmetrical or asymmetrical groups of dancers; grouping together tightly or spreading out evenly; creating focal points through the arrangement of bodies and body shapes; moving forward, backward, side to side

**time:** the pace or rhythm a dancer or group of dancers adopts, e.g., holding an absolute stillness; using short, sharp movements; moving slowly, moderately, or quickly; alternating sudden abrupt movement with deliberate sustained movement; following the basic beat of the accompaniment

**energy:** the vibrancy with which the elements of movement are performed, e.g., with heavy or light steps; with slow and sustained energy; with quick and sudden bursts of energy

## Notes

Discuss safety issues. When students move quickly, they need to consider the positions and locations of other students so they can avoid accidents.

## What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate focussed concentration;
- demonstrate thoughtful attention to instructions along with a willingness to explore ways to use the body to express the general rules or ideas of movement. Energy in performing the actions should be apparent.
- make meaningful and precise movements;
- use correct movement vocabulary when discussing movement activities.

Some students are kinesthetic learners who need to move their bodies to 'fix' understanding of new skills, information, and concepts for real comprehension. If they are given opportunities to use their bodies in focussed, directed activities; they often experience greater success in understanding text and content, including better comprehension, inferential skills, and connections between text, self, and the world.

Some students are not able to 'read' body stances and facial expressions correctly. They might respond inappropriately or express confusion in social situations where they need to interpret actions and/or expressions. These students can benefit from participating in well-defined movement activities used to find a kinesthetic context for an event or piece of text.

If music is appropriate, use a variety of different styles and moods. It is better to avoid using, well-known music, as students who hear music they recognize will often concentrate on listening rather than on participating in the activity. Alternately, use a small hand drum or have students perform the activities in silence.

Working in groups, students explore the element of movement. For example, a simple activity like *Follow the Leader* can be used to introduce moving through space. A challenge, such as, "How many different ways can you shape your arm and hand?" can demonstrate the variety of possibilities available to dancers. There should be a sense of energy in the performance of all dance elements, even when standing absolutely still.

In most introductory movement activities, students work independently. To help with focus, encourage students to stand in such a way that they cannot make eye contact with other students. Working with smaller groups makes this easier, but is not always practical. As they become more comfortable, students learn to concentrate and focus in larger groups.

Students explore ways to use their bodies to express emotions and ideas through disciplined action. They become more comfortable using their bodies to move in specific contexts.

## Notes

A discussion about appropriate body movements and poses may be necessary, depending on the ages and sophistication of the class.

## **Examples**

### **Bodystorming**

Bodystorming is the physical equivalent of brainstorming. Just as in brainstorming, there are no 'good' or 'bad' ideas; there are just ideas. Photograph bodystormed ideas as reference for the students as they develop a repertoire of ways to shape their bodies.

Groups of five or six students create a visual dictionary of possible ways to shape their bodies. Groups consider the criteria and decide whether to work with a single body part, e.g., an arm, and focus on all the different shapes which could be formed, or on whole body shapes. One student takes the first photograph, which will be a group shot of the others demonstrating their individually created shapes. Students apply ideas about space as they arrange themselves for the next photograph. They bodystorm more ways to create shapes using their self-selected criteria; a different group member takes over the photographer's role as they demonstrate their new ideas. Students continue taking turns photographing each other until everyone has had a chance to be the photographer at least once, and they have at least six different photographs of different shapes.

Photographs can be downloaded, printed out, and mounted onto display boards and posted. When students become more comfortable with moving their bodies, they repeat the activity considering how to create shapes with one or more partners.

As a follow-up, groups use the photo displays of other groups to recreate the shapes pictured.

### **Move and Freeze**

Students line up in four or five lines of 5 or 6 students (all facing in the same direction).

Begin the music; beat out a slow steady count on a hand drum, or slowly count out loud. Students in the back row run quickly to the front and freeze in a shape they can hold without losing their balance. Students in the new back row run to the front, until everyone has moved forward and frozen. The back row unfreezes, runs to the front and begins again.

## **Notes**

When students create a new freeze, it should contrast completely with their first freeze. (Simply repeating the first freeze facing a different direction is not considered new.) Frequently remind students of the qualities of movement – shape and space – that they can use to create the freezes.

### **Contrasting Shapes**

Students work independently to create five contrasting shapes that they can perform easily, quickly, and can hold for several seconds. Emphasize that shapes are not actions, e.g., jumping jacks are not shapes; and that shapes must be easy to create, e.g., handstands or splits are not advisable; and comfortable to hold. The shapes should show variety and could be abstract (not depicting any specific thing), dramatic (depicting an emotion), or action-based (showing someone in the process of doing something).

Once students have independently created five different shapes, and are sure they can recreate each one easily and quickly, ask them to assign a number from 1–5 to each shape. Students find a spot in the room where they can work comfortably and safely. If space is limited, divide the class into two groups and have each group perform separately.

Students begin in a neutral stance: standing tall, feet shoulder width apart, arms at the sides, eyes facing forward, not looking at anyone else. Call out ‘1’ and wait for several seconds until students have created their first body shape and frozen. Continue calling out numbers 1–5, slowly at first, then more quickly, moving in order, backwards, or scrambling the order. As the students perform, the teacher and observing students point out examples of various ways students used the qualities of movement to create shapes with their bodies.

## **Notes**

## Flocking

Flocking encourages cooperative participation. Choose slow music when beginning this activity. As the students become more comfortable and used to following, they can speed up their movements. Students arrange themselves into groups of three or four and stand in a triangle or diamond shape all facing the same direction. The student standing at the front point is the leader and begins moving slowly, changing levels, demonstrating the different qualities of movement with their body. The other members of the group follow the movements as simultaneously as possible. (It should look as though all are moving together, rather than copying the leader's movements.) After 20 or 30 seconds, the lead person slowly turns to the left or right. All other members of the group turn in the same direction; and lead the group follows a new leader. Continue until all members have been the leader.

Remind students to keep their movements slow and visible – anything performed in front of the leaders' body will not be able to be seen by the rest of the group.

As a challenge, students use their movements to express emotions. They consider what kinds of shapes, lines, energy, and use of space they can apply to depict, e.g., elation or grief.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students who are not allowed to participate in any type of dance-related movement activity could choose the music for a specific emotion or style of movement, or act as observers to see that set movement parameters are being followed by the performers.

## Simple Tableaux

A tableau is a living, frozen picture made up of large groups. Tableaux help students express setting, plot, and/or character developments and motivations without having to use words. They are used to reinforce content as well as to develop group problem-solving strategies. Participants have a role to play in a ‘snapshot’ of a scene. Students are given a situation or event, e.g., replicating an illustration in a book, or recreating a historical event, and then create a group pose to portray that situation.

Rules for creating tableaux include:

- The entire group demonstrates an identifiable scene, concept, or emotion.
- Each person depicts an individual, different character.
- Each person actively participates in and contributes to the tableau scene.
- The entire group remains absolutely silent.
- The entire group remains absolutely still in holding a pose or position.
- Each person creates a centre of focus through body arrangement.
- Each person uses different levels in space.
- Each person demonstrates energy in the body through the held pose with strong, crisp lines.
- Each person uses facial expressions to heighten emotions.
- Each person focuses and concentrates throughout the tableau.

Students use more formal applications of drama techniques to tell simple stories without words. They continue to develop collaborative and cooperative decision-making and problem-solving skills in deciding on the composition of the tableaux. Students concentrate to create an effective scene; they define a specific shape, form, depiction, and/or emotion within each tableau.

Groups can perform their tableaux for each other, then incorporate ideas from teachers and classmates to make them more effective.

To improve the tableau, each student can decide on a change to one thing about their role – perhaps the level, emotion, or position in the tableau. The student, other members of the group, or class observers can explain how the change helps or takes away from the tableau focus.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- explain who their ‘character’ is, what that character is thinking, what they are contributing to the overall effect of the tableau, and why they are posing as they are.
- are able to explain why one scene is more effective than another.

## Sample Tableaux

- Depict an activity such as playing a game or sport, going on a picnic, riding in a school bus filled with energetic children, etc.
- Depict the central event in a fairy tale or folk tale.
- Recreate a scene from a picture book, with the students' bodies creating all the elements (no props).
- Choose a scene from a picture book and create a prior or later scene.
- Use one or two simple unrelated props in an unusual way.
- Depict an emotion.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students who are visually impaired may need help to find their focal point and position in the scene.
- If cultural issues preclude boys and girls touching, use homogeneous groups.

## Soundscapes

Sounds are universal, regardless of language. Soundscapes can be effective tools in teaching students to recognize tone/atmosphere in a piece of writing and/or to define a setting.

Students use pure sound (no words) to help interpret text. They analyse situations and events to create wordless performance events which underline personal and group meaning of text. Students create soundscapes using their voices, hands and feet, found objects, and/or musical instruments to create mood, a sense of place, and to tell a story. Reluctant students can add a sound without worrying about standing out from peers. For auditory learners, setting important non-fiction information in a soundscape format can help them recall facts.

### Examples

#### Vocal Warm-ups

Warm-up exercises help loosen the vocal chords and the muscles of the face and lips.

- Students sit or stand in a comfortable, relaxed stance. On a count of 4, they slowly inhale through their noses, hold for a count of 4, then exhale through their mouths to a count of 4. Repeat several times.
- Students inhale slowly through their noses to a count of 4 and exhale pushing the air through their teeth with a “ts” sound, controlling the speed with pressure through the diaphragm. They say a single syllable several times in a controlled, rhythmic manner, then change to another syllable and repeat keeping their jaw loose. They can try syllables such as *ya, ta, ma, za, and fa*, then choose another vowel sound and change the consonant. Repeat changing the dynamic from very quiet to middling loud, then back again.
- Working the lips, the muscles of the face, and the tongue energetically, students repeat the vowels with a consonant start, e.g., *mee, may, mah, moe, moo*, and gradually speed up the tempo of the repetitions. They change the consonant used, or alternatively make the *brrrr* or *trrrr* sound (tongue roll), with a ‘raspberry’ (pushing air through loosely closed lips).
- Starting with the lowest sound they can create, students chant one open syllable such as “ya” in a long scoop up to the highest sound possible. They should keep their jaw and facial muscles relaxed. They repeat with a new

syllable from high to low. They say nonsense alliterative phrases such as “*bibbety, bobbety, boo*” quickly.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- use only pure sound appropriate to the mood and setting and no words;
- are able to explain their choices of sounds;
- work collaboratively and cooperatively, with all students in the group having input of ideas and participation in the performance.

Students who are not used to breathing deeply and slowly may become light headed. They should sit quietly until the effect passes.

If students are not genetically able to make a tongue roll sound, they can just say the syllable.

- Students repeat well-known tongue twisters, then write and repeat new ones. They practise loud sounds safely, by inhaling deeply; relaxing the jaw and opening their throat (should feel like a yawn). They use their diaphragm to push air quickly and sharply out of their mouth, loudly saying simple syllables such as “*ha*.” They should be careful not to close their throat or force the sound.

### The Rainstorm

Students sit in a circle to create the sound of the rain. They begin by lightly snapping their fingers, then lightly tapping the floor. Tell the students that they are hearing the start of the rain. It is just lightly sprinkling. They gradually change to lightly tapping knees/legs – it is starting to rain harder. Slowly increase the tempo and the loudness.

Continue to increase the sound as the storm grows. Students might stamp their feet at the height of the storm. Finally, as the storm

wanes, de-escalate the sound until students are back to quietly snapping their fingers or tapping the floor.

### Variations

- The class generates sounds that might be heard in different environments at different times, e.g., a day in the life of a city. Students brainstorm a list of sounds that they might hear at different times of day in a city.
- Initially, the teacher conducts the soundscapes allowing the sounds to escalate and de-escalate, or increase and decrease in tempo. As students become more comfortable they can and should take turns directing.
- When working with text, poetry can be a good choice for creating soundscapes. For example, the poem “Dawn is a Fisherman” by Raymond Barrow or “Windharp” by John Montague are vivid with sound-descriptive words. Challenge the students to recreate the poems in soundscape form, then choose their own poems to perform in soundscapes.

### Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- Some students can take on the more challenging ‘spotlight’ sounds, e.g., in a jungle soundscape they might want to be a monkey.
- Students who are reluctant to participate can choose to be the wind whistling through the trees or the rain lightly hitting the leaves, or to work with a partner.

(See *Voices: Poetry and Art from Around the World*, selected by Barbara Brenner.)

## Choral Speech

A piece of text, either pre-existing (such as a poem, an account of a battle, or a series of instructions), or written for this purpose, is performed using sounds for effect and words for meaning.

Choral speech allows students to look at text in different ways. They experiment with ways meaning can change through text presentation and manipulation. Choral speech activities include the whole class, groups, partners, or individual voices. Choral speech activities allow students to explore language in playful and non-traditional ways.

In small groups, students choose a simple phrase or slogan and demonstrate each of the criteria for creating choral speech.

Criteria for creating choral speech:

- varying the tempo of the words (the speed with which words are spoken)
- changing the volume of the spoken words
- evoking the emotion of the content through vocal colour
- using rhythm and repetition of select words or phrases
- changing the number of voices speaking at any one time
- adding specific movements to emphasize and/or underline meaning
- adding soundscape effects to underline meaning

## Examples

### Simple Text

Give students a piece of simple text, e.g., a description of a landscape or a short poem. Students work in groups to decide collaboratively which words they want to repeat; how they create vocal colour (high/low, soft/loud, fast/slow); and where they could use sounds such as those created by found instruments or musical instruments to reinforce text meaning. Students practise their interpretation of the text, then each group performs for the class.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- work with the different components of choral speech;
- work collaboratively to make decisions about performance;
- explain orally or in a journal entry why they chose to use certain choral effects, e.g., using repetition to underline an emotion.

Poetry books (by Paul Fleischman and by Charles R. Smith) and picture books that are suitable for choral speech are listed in Resources

## Original Text

Once students have had a chance to explore both soundscapes and choral speech, they can use their own original texts for presentations. The techniques also work well for non-fiction text. For example, an important passage from a science work sheet, the story of the Northwest Mounted Police, and the names for polygons can each become spoken performances.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- English language learners contribute sounds, or speak the words or phrases that they understand.
- Students with speech difficulties can be more successful verbally by repeating or rhythmically saying the text.
- Set up larger groups, so reluctant students feel more comfortable.

## Drama Structures – Curriculum Connections

### Visualization

Drama takes the students out of the everyday world, into new and possibly unknown territory. Successful drama involves students willingly moving to a world they have newly created. Visualization, a technique used to imagine a setting, character, or situation, supports this process. It helps students develop an internal idea of how they might look, act, or respond when they begin the drama process in a role-play and provides a mental picture of settings they will be moving through in later activities.

Students work through scenarios using visualization to create characters for specific role-play situations. As they become more comfortable with visualization, they use this technique to establish personal interpretations of a variety of texts.

When students have developed ideas for a new persona, they begin the role-play activities.

### Links with the Curriculum

Provide quiet, text-free music to help set a scene. Students make themselves comfortable, either by lying down or by sitting in a relaxed position with their eyes closed. Their eyes remain closed until they are told to open them and do not talk throughout the process; focussing instead on the instructions. After a few moments of quiet breathing, ask students to feel their bodies pressing against the floor or chair. They tightly tense all the muscles in their feet and ankles; hold the tension for a slow count of five; then slowly release all the tension completely. Repeat tensing and releasing movements for the legs, torso, arms, hands, and head/neck. At the end of this exercise, students should feel relaxed.

Tell students they are going to begin a voyage to the place in which the drama occurs. Set a scene; describe the situation they are going to explore in greater depth. Talk about sounds students should hear, scents and textures they would feel, the temperature of the surrounding air, colours of clothing, flavours, etc. Layer on details, describing physical surroundings and whatever is necessary to allow students to paint a vivid mental picture of the scene for the drama.

### Notes

#### What to Look For

Students:

- allow themselves to ‘willingly suspend their belief’ and move into an imaginary situation, space, and/or character;
- create character traits, even if quite small to start;
- maintain concentration without disturbing others around them.

Describe characters who might populate the scene. Ask

- Using the picture

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students experiencing language difficulties should have extra time to plan their responses.
- Some students may benefit from shorter visualization journeys.
- Students who are used to the visualization process, can lead, setting the scene, etc. These students formulate a personal role while setting the scene for others.

students to observe these people as they move through the scene. Identify a few of them in general terms, e.g., a young man, a sailor, a character's friends, a doctor. Through questions, help students establish the character they are to become. By the end of the visualization, students should have a picture of themselves as one of the characters in a setting.

Allow students a few minutes to see themselves in this new world; then ask them to open their eyes, remaining silent. Students stand and begin to quietly move around the room. Lead them through this walk, reminding them of the setting through which they are passing. Help them add to their characters by making suggestions about who each character is, e.g., how a character's age might affect the way he or she moves, how confidence might affect movement, etc. Quietly speak with those who may not be changing the way they walk, stressing the importance of making at least small changes as this will help when they begin the role-play. Now ask them to sit down and quietly think about how that character might talk.

### Sample Scenarios

- When studying early explorers to Canada, set the scene on one of the explorer's boats. Paint a visual picture of the smallness of the space, the roughness of the wood decks, the feel of the wind on the sailors' faces, etc. Populate the boat with sailors, cabin boys, a map-maker, the captain, the first mate, a cook, a doctor, etc. Move to a role-play between the first mate and the crew who are frightened and angered by their situation.

book *The Rabbits* by John Marsden, take the students to an alien world populated by an agrarian society who are being invaded by creatures they cannot understand. Set the scene with rural images and characters such as farmers, healers, shamans, children, weavers, etc. Move to a role-play between one of the elders and the people of the community who must decide whether or not to seek out the invaders to become friends with them.

## Notes

Avert stereotypes with gentle reminders, for example, “Not all older people walk with canes.”

## In-Role

Students take on a character, develop it, and maintain it over a sustained period of time. These activities give them an opportunity to explore the story of the drama. They ‘experience’ the lives of other people, possibly in different times. Students-in-role develop empathy and the ability to state another’s point of view while respecting the views of others.

Role-play allows students to make connections between their lives and the lives of other students; they learn how to infer the motivations of other people. Students are asked to make judgements about personalities; why somebody would choose to hide or show parts of their personality at certain times.

The teacher can be part of the role-play in which case they control the direction of the role-play from within or allow students to take the lead as the teacher takes a lesser role.

The teacher monitors the pace and direction of the drama by asking questions and making suggestions, to create problems or conflicts to be solved by the students.

#### Possible Roles for the Teacher

**Authority** in which the teacher is in complete charge of the drama. This guidance and direction can contribute to students comfort.

**Second in Command** to give students the opportunity to enter into the decision-making process. Student leaders help where they can.

**One of the Gang** where the teacher takes a role as the students are doing. However, it is the teacher's prerogative to refocus the drama through dialogue in-role, if necessary.

**Authority Opposed to the Group** where, the teacher is the leader of a different group. In this role, the teacher has the opportunity to challenge students.

#### Links with the Curriculum

Some students may find it difficult, especially when just introduced to drama, to move into a role. Students can use cues from photographs, works of art, music, newspaper articles, and other resources which may help 'set the stage.' Besides having students participate in visualizations, large group brainstorming about the kinds of people who might inhabit a place, the setting, the responses they might expect to hear, and so on, can be very useful.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate an ability to focus and maintain a role throughout the exercise; they speak and move as their characters and respond as those characters would in a given situation;
- demonstrate their learning through their responses in-role;
- make connections to themselves and the world through a text.
- identify any problems they experienced in maintaining their roles.

Students may need help in maintaining their roles. Students may break role, giggling and laughing; responding as themselves; and/or acting 'out of character.' Stop the role-play activity and ask students to describe the difficulties they are having, refocus them through guided questions, then restart the role play once students feel ready to re-enter the drama.

Use teacher-in-role to introduce or reinforce curriculum concepts. When the teacher enters the role-play with their students, not only are they acting as guides, they are participating. Students see an adult in a situation where they willingly suspend belief. As active players, teachers are able to subtly influence the story and elicit from students responses that might not occur in a normal class setting. They have the opportunity to scaffold (build upon previous actions and dialogue, refer to earlier content lessons) and model role playing without the students realizing it. They direct the students to specific information in the text, allowing the student to create connections to themselves and the world. Like student-in-role, teachers create and justify their characters' opinions, and through this help their students develop inferences and solve problems related to the text.

### **Sample Scenarios (Student-in-Role)**

- When studying the development of the Canadian Pacific Railway, some students take on the roles of railway builders (navvies) and some become project managers. Speaking in-role, the students outline their difficult living and working situations and attempt to negotiate better conditions with the managers who, in-role, attempt to dissuade the workers from their threats to quit work.
- After finishing the novel *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick, students take on the roles of Kevin's friends and explain what Kevin meant to each one of them. They create, in-role, a memorial to commemorate Kevin's life.
- As enrichment, students create and sustain the role of an historical figure, or a character from a narrative and use the role to present a report to class mates. For an even greater challenge, students create and sustain two roles presenting them both in the form of a dialogue.

## Sample Scenarios (Teacher-in-Role)

- When studying explorers, students learned about the living conditions of sailors on the boats which travelled across the oceans in search of new lands and riches. Students play the roles of sailors on one of Christopher Columbus' ships. Leave the room, and return in the role of the ship's doctor. Speak to the class in-role, referring to the students as sailors. Let them know that the captain is aware that they have been complaining about their life on board and knows they are unhappy with current conditions. Elicit information from the students about the living conditions, their fears, etc. Speak to them in-role, and if they respond out-of-role, act puzzled about their behaviour, blaming it on the current situation, etc. Remind students that the ship's doctor cannot make changes, but can bring the sailors' concerns to the captain. Try to get the students to detail their issues and fears.
- In a math class, arrive in the persona of the King of Athens who is thinking of building a new temple. A new mathematician named Pythagoras, says he is capable of designing the new temple, and building it so it will be square and stable. The mathematicians (the students) who teach there offer information and advice.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students who are reluctant participants or are English language learners can participate with the expectation that they will not be as vocal.
- Students can either describe the aspect of the role-play they found most rewarding and personally effective in a journal entry, or orally.

## Writing-in-Role

Students take on the voice of a character they have created or role-played, expressing the viewpoints, ideas, thoughts, dreams, etc. of that character through writing in a variety of styles. Some students find it difficult to find their own voice in their writing. When they have had a chance, through role-playing, to experience someone else's ideas, views, emotions, etc., a better sense of voice often appears in their writing.

Writing-in-role helps students develop empathy for others, since they are writing as someone else.

The writing which is generated by these activities can be surprisingly powerful and honest. Many students express greater pride in the texts they create in-role than in other writing activities. It is often surprising how well students who have difficulty with writing can write in-role. English language learners, for whom vocabulary is a challenge, often write in-role with great poignancy.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students express the ideas of characters they either play themselves, or observe being played by classmates. They use a variety of writing forms to effectively reflect their ideas and responses. Use writing-in-role after students have had a chance to participate in a detailed role-play activity. Writing forms may include: letters, diary entries, advice pieces, opinions, arguments, poems, and lists. These pieces of writing can also be used as assessment tools for content understanding, application, and synthesis. Tell students that there is to be a content component as well as a character component to the writing-in-role assignment. Students should have multiple opportunities to work with different forms of writing, then they can choose the form to use as well as the pieces for the teacher to assess.

### Sample Scenarios

- In a math class, when working on the concept of exponents, read *The Token Gift* by Hugh William McKibbin. Create a role-playing situation wherein the King's mathematicians and advisors meet to discuss the outcome of the promise made to the old man. At the end of the role-play, students, in the role of mathematicians, write a government report explaining how doubling the grains of rice will affect the country.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- writing reflects a particular character's responses and motivations;
- present the voice of the character consistently and authentically.

- After reading the chapter in Rodman Philbrick’s novel, *Freak the Mighty*, where Kevin’s mother rushes over to Max’s house to ‘rescue’ Kevin, students work in pairs to role play one of two scenarios: either Kevin’s mother in conversation with a friend explaining why she felt Kevin needed rescuing, or Kevin’s mother talking to Kevin about why she doesn’t want him playing with Max any more. After the role play, students write a diary entry from the point of view of Kevin, his mother, or Max, explaining how they felt about what happened.
- As enrichment, students write a sequel or prequel to a narrative, using the voice of the main character. Alternately, students rewrite a narrative or historical account from a different point of view, e.g., retell the story of Cinderella from the point of view of the mice or describe the first parliament in Ottawa from the point of view of the cleaning staff.

## Notes

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- Students who are less proficient in writing can choose shorter writing forms, can use a scribe, or tape their responses, if necessary.

## Variations of Tableaux

Variations on tableaux are used to interpret character motivation; sequence events in fiction or non-fiction situations; predict outcomes; define subtext; and make connections with text and self, text and other text, and text and world/society.

Variations on basic tableaux techniques give all students alternate ways to demonstrate deeper understanding of text. By becoming a living part of the content being explored, a student is more likely to understand the content. The tableaux variations become a way for students who have difficulties with language to represent symbolic, metaphoric, or thematic content.

## Links with Curriculum

Once students have created simple tableaux and are comfortable with creating a character in a tableau, they create a tableau based on a lesson. This time, they speak in their tableaux, but only when they are ‘tapped in’ (see below). Students use tableaux to predict and infer character action and demonstrate understanding of important events or incidents in fiction and non-fiction contexts.

## Tapping In

The teacher gently touches each member of the tableau on their shoulder. At that time, participants respond with a short sentence or phrase reflecting what their character is thinking or feeling at that moment. The teacher returns to students and they repeat their phrases. The tapping in creates a series of overlapping thoughts and ideas, each one offering a character’s ideas and impressions on the event being portrayed in the tableau. These phrases can be used to create poetry, as a starting point for writing-in-role, or as the text for choral speech pieces (see pp. 17–18 and 30).

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- explain who their ‘character is,’ what that character is thinking and what they are contributing to the overall effect of the tableaux, and why they are posing as they are;
- demonstrate understanding of the text through their choices in pose, character, and oral/written comments;
- show understanding of character motivation, and an ability to make reasonable predictions based on previous input;
- use tableaux to relate to the issues/concepts in the curriculum;
- who create tableaux of the same scene will be able to explain why one of the scenes is more effective than the other;
- effectively explain their choices, orally or in writing.

### **Before, During, After**

Given an incident or excerpt from a text (fiction or non-fiction), students create a series of tableaux, the first of which depicts what the scene looked like before the incident or excerpt, what the central image of the incident looks like ‘now,’ and a prediction scene of what is yet to come. Students begin from neutral positions – standing with their feet slightly apart, their arms relaxed and a neutral expression on their faces. At a signal, decided by the group, they silently move into their first tableau, hold the freeze for a pre-determined amount of time (usually about 10 seconds), move into the middle tableau, hold it, move into the last tableau, freeze, and then return to a neutral position. Each person in the tableau speaks one line of dialogue in each tableau reflecting on what is occurring, and commenting on and making connections with what went before.

### **Living Illustrations**

Divide a text passage describing several different events, e.g., an incident from the history curriculum, a science principle, a ballad or story poem, or an action sequence in a novel into five or six sections. Assign two different sections of the text to each small group. The first section is performed as a choral speech, the second section as a series of tableaux to illustrate another group’s choral speech reading. The groups are responsible for creating tableaux that depict a literal representation of the text, but can also include emotional responses, as appropriate.

The class presents the text in a round-robin format, with each group performing a verse of text using choral speech, and a tableau for another group’s verse.

### **Sample Scenarios**

- Select a ballad such as “Barbara Allen” or a poem such as “The Highwayman” by Alfred Noyes on which to base tableaux. These poems divide into sections and contain melodic language for speaking, and vivid images to interpret.
- When studying ancient Greece, teachers or students select informational text to illustrate content through tableaux and tapping-in.
- When studying the solar system, students find space poems to intersperse with instructional text. Students use

these texts to create tableaux with choral speech (see pp. 17–18 and 30).

## Notes

- As enrichment related to the study of Canada's role in the First World War, students choose appropriate materials such as sections from John Marsden's *Prayer for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* or *Where Poppies Grow: A World War I Companion*, by Linda Granfield as the basis for the presentation. Students are responsible for choosing texts containing vivid writing which lends itself to tableaux and to choral speech.

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- Students with vision difficulties may need help to find their focal point and position in the scene.
- Some students may retell a story or illustrate a concept as an entire series of tableaux or use tableaux to create a sequel or variation to a text.

## Notes

## Soundscapes

These activities build on the activities students experienced as they explored the process of creating introductory soundscapes in (see pp. 15–16). By the end of these activities, students use soundscape techniques to create their own presentations.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students could create a soundscape as a pre-reading activity to give them a context for comprehension, allowing them to make connections with their own experiences.

Students use sound in more focussed applications, creating background meaning to pre-existing texts. They analyse text to determine how soundscape can be used to extend understanding of a text.

Students review the techniques used to create effective soundscapes. Brainstorming a list of the ways to create sounds using voice, body, and the environment, and post it to remind students of

the variety of sounds and techniques available to them.

### Sample Scenarios

- Students who have read the book, *Drumheller Dinosaur Dance*, by R. Heidbreder, create a series of soundscapes reflecting the escalating and de-escalating mayhem as the dinosaurs reassemble themselves, meet for a wild party under the moon, then return to their bone beds at dawn. Soundscapes could be inserted at appropriate points as the story is both read and interpreted through tableaux.
- Before the teacher reads aloud the story of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, as retold by Bruce Coville, students recreate the sounds of the forest during day and at night. One half of the class is responsible for 'day' sounds and one for 'night' sounds. Students should be given time to create an appropriate soundscape. The teacher stops reading at various places in the story for students to add their soundscapes to the text. Extend the activity by asking students to create soundscapes for their favourite places in the story.

### Notes

#### What to Look For

Students:

- defend their choices of sounds and the places the soundscapes were inserted into the text;
- use soundscapes effects to demonstrate understanding of a text.

#### Differentiating Instruction

- Some students can create the more challenging 'spotlight' sounds.
- Students who are reluctant to participate can provide simpler sounds.

## Choral Speech

Recalling, and applying content information in choral speech gives students another tool to review and reinforce information from various subjects. As well, students must work together to select information for their choral speech presentations, making decisions about what is important and what can safely be left out.

### Links with the Curriculum

As students continue to explore choral speech conventions, they apply them to self-selected texts. Students discover ways in which choral speech can emphasize or underline meanings, and create interest in text recitations. Review and post a list of various techniques (see pp. 17–18) students can use in creating their choral speech presentations as a reminder of the many different effects they can create by manipulating text.

### Sample Scenarios

- *Science Verse* by John Scieszka supports science curricula in a humorous way. This picture book uses amusing science poems set to familiar tunes. Groups of three or four students choose one of the poems, then work with the elements of choral speech to present it. As a variation, students could sing the poem to the familiar tune provided, then repeat the performance using choral speech effects.
- When studying global issues, students work independently to search for phrases and words in the newspaper reflecting a particular current issue. Students work in small groups to organize their words and phrases into a poem. Then, they decide on how to present their global issues poem as a choral speech presentation.
- Once students have experimented with choral speech using pre-existing texts, encourage them to use their own notes, opinions, journal entries, etc. for a choral speech.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- defend the group's choices as methods to underline meaning, emphasize important points, and create mood and/or emotion orally or in a journal entry;
- use choral speech conventions effectively for specific situations.

### Differentiating Instruction

- English language learners contribute sounds, or speak the words and phrases that they understand.

## Objects of Character

Objects, either found or created, can be used to flesh out characters or to advance dramatic tension through plot twists. The object can have meaning on several levels; their importance changes through the drama. Objects of character might be used by students for a personal character; be given to another character to use in their role; or be provided by the teacher, for students to discover in the course of the drama.

Students need to know the character for whom the object is made. They have to understand why the character might need an object, why it might have meaning or usefulness, what it might say about the character, how it might influence other characters' responses, etc. When using objects of character in non-fiction situations, students think about what objects might be authentic to the drama story. The creation/choice of object becomes a way to show research concretely.

An object of character does not have to be elaborate. Sometimes, it can simply be an everyday object given to another character to help in a quest. The object chosen or created must grow out of the role-play. In other words, these objects should not be created in advance of the drama unless the teacher wishes to lead the drama in a particular direction. Even then, it is impossible to plan too far in advance since the purpose of role-play is improvisation that leads students to problem-solving strategies.

## Links with the Curriculum

Students create objects out of clay, paper, or other art materials. Teachers collect and store random, interesting, or unusual things such as buttons, bits of fabric, braid, ribbons, shells, small coloured stones, sequins, glass 'jewels,' tiny toys, miniatures, beads, balsa wood, metallic papers, etc., along with thread, needles, embroidery silks, glues, and so on for students to use in creating their objects.

Students analyse characters and situations and decide on appropriate objects that contribute to the drama. In the first example, they use a variety of media to build their objects, and then explain why their chosen object is appropriate to the story created. In the second example, students use pre-existing objects to make inferences about an unusual young man. After the role-play, students write-in-role as the character, basing their text on their inferences.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- make choices and comments that are thoughtful, insightful references to the character and based on reasonable interpretations of previous knowledge;
- create objects that reflect understanding of content and are appropriate to the theme when working in an historical context.

## Sample Scenarios

- In a history unit, students create characters around the theme of the *filles du roi*, young women (usually orphans) who were sent to Canada to become wives of young French men who had settled in Quebec. As part of the final farewell, students create objects of character to give to the young women who are leaving their homeland, never to return. The teacher guides the students by going into role as the mother superior or priest of an orphanage, reminding the students that the *filles du roi* are travelling to a strange and wild land. They will need gifts to help them remember France and survive the trip to the new world, not only physically, but mentally and emotionally. Elicit from the students ideas about the sorts of gifts the *filles du roi* might need or appreciate. Students create objects as gifts, present their objects in-role and write-in-role explaining their choices.
- In the young adult novel, *Buddha Boy* by Kathe Koje, the lead character, Jimson, is a North American boy who becomes a practising Buddhist, much to the confusion and derision of his classmates. He is secretive, has a mysterious past, and has one obvious strength – he is a brilliant artist. Once the class has read the first two chapters, the teacher, in-role as the school principal, brings in Jimson’s knapsack “which has been left behind in the cafeteria.” The teacher has filled it with objects, some things found in any teenager’s backpack and some unusual and, chosen by the teacher who knows the character’s secrets. The teacher invites students who are in-role as other teachers and support staff, to a special staff meeting to discuss this student and the difficulties he is experiencing in the school.
- The teacher suggests that by examining the items found in the back pack, students might be able to learn more about this boy, and suggest some strategies to help him better fit in at school. After students have had time to examine the objects, they speak in character about Jimson. They write-in-role, as Jimson, explaining what each object means to him. Students refer to this piece of writing as they read on in the book, to see how well they were able to predict Jimson’s character.

## Notes

- As enrichment, students work alone or in pairs to fill a suitcase with objects which would represent a fictional or non-fictional character at a particular point in a narrative. Each object would represent a facet of the character's life to that point. Each object would have its own story, written in the voice of the object, e.g., "I am Louis Riel's personal prayer book, which was given to him by his mother when he entered the seminary to become a Catholic priest. He has carried me everywhere and has depended on me to help him through his roughest times."

## Notes

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- English language learners could work with another student.

## Corridor of Voices

Corridor of voices is a drama process which is used at a time when a decision must be made, advice must be given, or the focus of a role play is about to change. Students, either in-role or as themselves, stand facing each other in two rows with enough space between them for another person to comfortably walk. A single student or pair of students walks between the two rows while the students who make up the corridor speak or whisper advice, questions, support, memories, etc., depending on the context of the role play. The student analyses the action which occurred up to this point in the exercise, considers possibilities about where the drama/story could go, and thinks about the character who is taking the walk, as well as their own character.

If the students are reduced to just repeating the same phrase (“Good luck,” “We’ll miss you.”) they need to spend more time on role play or on content acquisition before continuing the activity. In this case, reviewing and/or modelling sample responses is useful.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students decide, based on what has happened up to this point and what they know about the character, what advice or messages would best reflect both character and situation. They use inference skills and text predictions to decide on the advice to give. As well, they consider their own characters, and how they reflect that character as they speak with the corridor traveller. When using this activity with non-fiction materials, students use previous knowledge to demonstrate content.

### Sample Scenarios

- In reading L.M. Montgomery’s *Anne of Green Gables*, the teacher stops at the point where Anne must say good-bye to her friends at teacher’s college and return home. As she walks between the two rows, students in-role as classmates and instructors remind her of fun times they had together, offer her advice for her career, and tell her how much they will miss her.

## Notes

Some students might feel claustrophobic if the corridor is too close; have students maintain a reasonable distance between the two lines.

### What to Look For

Students:

- make appropriate and thoughtful comments, responses, and suggestions that reflect the theme or topic set by the situation.

- When discussing bullying and peer pressure, read aloud the book, *Riding the Tiger* by Eve Bunting. At the point where the tiger makes his offer to the young man to climb onto his back, students create a corridor of voices. Ask for a volunteer to play the role of the tiger and walk between the students who ask him questions about why it is so important that someone climb onto his back, and contribute thoughts and comments about how they feel about the tiger. Afterwards, the student who played the tiger responds in-role to some of the students questions and comments.
- In a study of the ecosystems of the Earth, students form a corridor to offer support and suggestions to an “explorer” who is about to leave for a journey to visit the Arctic, the Amazon, the Himalayas, etc.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- If the corridor is about someone leaving on a long journey and the corridor is going to offer advice and farewells, English language learners could contribute a simple ‘good-bye.’
- Reluctant participants can write their contributions on a piece of paper to hand on.
- Hearing-impaired students can participate if the teacher makes the voice amplifier available to all the speakers in the corridor.
- Blind or sight-impaired students can have a neutral guide to help them through the corridor.

## Interviews and Hot-Seating

Interviews and hot-seating are used to help the group find out more about a specific event or character. A student or teacher takes on a role and is asked questions by the class. The rest of the students usually take on the roles of reporters or detectives. Their objective is to find out more information to work within the drama. In hot-seating, the students who are asking the questions are not in-role.

Interviews and hot-seating improve student comprehension of character, events, and content material. When students assume their roles, they must make connections between the character and themselves. The student must put him/herself into the shoes of the character. They use what they know from the text to answer the questions. As well, they must make assumptions on what they know. These techniques improve students' ability to make inferences and judgements.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students who take on the roles of interviewers need to be familiar with the text. They need to make decisions about the types of questions that will give them the most information. Those who are asking questions might need some initial guidance on how to ask 'in depth' questions, i.e., questions which will elicit a detailed answer, adding to the understanding of a character and/or situation.

Students use previous knowledge to formulate questions and answers during these activities. Their questions and answers grow from inferences and analysis of previously learned material to expand their knowledge and understanding. They make connections between what they know and what is said.

### Sample Scenarios

- While studying medieval times, to help prepare for a feast, students decide upon a role to play, e.g., Sir Ryan the knight, Martha the weaver, etc. Students use hot-seating techniques to help each other reinforce their characters. They ask a student in-role a variety of questions to help create the character. With each question, the student in-role develops a deeper understanding of his character. There are no right or wrong answers as long as an attempt is made to deepen the understanding of the character.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- respond in-role, making a good attempt to stay in character by answering appropriately.
- use previous knowledge to expand on responses.

- Interviews could be used while studying the genre of mystery. For example, someone has stolen the prized jewel from a heavily guarded safe. Some students, in-role as detectives, could interview other students in-role as suspects to find out their motives and alibis.

## Notes

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- Interviewing and hot-seating can be stressful for some students. It is important that the students feel comfortable. Everyone should be encouraged to participate as an interviewer if not in the 'hot seat.'
- English language learners might feel uncomfortable with asking and answering questions, but by listening they can become familiar with content vocabulary.

## Mantle of the Expert

Students rely on what is already known about the topic and make connections. To solve the problem, they must work with others to develop and incorporate their ideas. Using what they know, they create a realistic and believable solution. It gives interpersonal learners a chance to work cooperatively with others and collaborate to show their understanding.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students work in a group to solve a problem as experts in a topic. They are working as themselves, not in-role, as if they are experts in a field, e.g., doctors or archaeologists who must come up with the answer to a problem posed either by the teacher or by other students. Students work together to create ideas and finally develop a solution to a problem. When creating new characters, students should ensure that performances avoid stereotypical behaviours.

### Sample Scenarios

- When studying ecosystems, students learn about the effects of the destruction of the rainforest in South America. To highlight the importance of this ecosystem, students are given this scenario:

Students act as ecologists who are told that doctors have found a plant in the rainforest that might cure all cancers. The problem is that the area of the rainforest where the plant is found is scheduled to be burnt down for farmland. The students' job is to present their findings on the importance of maintaining the rain forest to the farmers who plan to clear the land. They must use information gathered in science class and through research to propose a solution which would make both the farmers and the ecologists happy.

- In an advisor group meeting, students are presented with information that vandalism in their school has increased. Parents would like to hire a security guard to patrol the halls. The school would like to come up with an alternate solution. Working in groups of three or four, students in the roles of peer mediators, are presented with the task of creating a plan to address the issue and suggest solutions to prevent further damage to the school. They must convince the parents that their solutions are preferable to hiring an outsider to patrol the halls.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate the ability to use previously learned information to develop their plans;
- show that they are working together cooperatively and everyone shares in the presentation of their solutions;
- maintain focus and attentiveness during their presentation.

### Differentiating Instruction

- English language learners should be encouraged to draw their ideas if they cannot communicate them verbally.

## Using Masks

Students create and use complex masks to demonstrate understanding of concepts and content. Masks are representational and/or symbolic, rather than the neutral face used in the introductory mask activities.

More advanced mask work is ideal for creating and understanding character traits and motivations.

## Links with the Curriculum

As students work with more complex masks, they identify specific physical and vocal characteristics of the role they have adopted. Working with masks, students explore archetypes as they develop their characters. If students are working with half-masks, they use dialogue as well as movement to depict characters. For instructions on how to create a variety of different types of masks, see pp. 49 and 52 of this document.

## Sample Scenarios

- While studying folk tales or fairy tales, students use self-created full- or half-face masks to retell a story. Students think about how their character would move and/or speak. For example, how would the Big Bad Wolf move? How would he show that he is menacing? How would he act when he was trying to blow down the pig's house or was dressed like Granny?
- While studying ancient civilizations or other cultures, students research dances or movement from these civilizations and create a mask performance to illustrate their findings.
- As an extension activity, introduce *comedia del'arte* figures to the students. These are stock characters from 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian mask theatre. The masks used are always half-masks and include an old miser, a foolish lover, a flirtatious girl, her rather stupid boyfriend, an over-protective father, a quack doctor, etc. They are early clown figures and are a lot of fun to use in mask scenarios. Once students have had a chance to experiment with these figures, they can create 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalents and scenes and dialogue to go with them. This activity requires care as the comedy of the figures lies in archetypes of personality rather than stereotypes.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- follow masks conventions (see p. 49);
- move in character, using large, precise and exaggerated movements.

In some cultures masks have a special significance and should be treated with respect.

## Movement Adaptations

Students revise and apply basic movements to specific situations. Adapting and using the movement activities learned earlier gives students a chance to further explore ways to use movement to express meaning.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students apply the movement activities learned earlier to specific learning contexts, using them to demonstrate and underline understanding of content. Review concepts before proceeding to more complicated applications.

### Sample Scenarios

- When studying simple machines, students use their bodies to create the moving parts of giant machines, interlocking their movements to create a smooth moving whole.
- As part of a literature unit exploring the Holocaust, the teacher reads Roberto Innocenti's picture book *Rose Blanche* to the class. At select points in the narrative, students work in groups to come up with four or five contrasting shapes arranged in space to reflect the emotions experienced by the characters at that point. For example, at the end of the book, Rose has disappeared. Students create a movement piece based on contrasting shapes expressing her mother's feelings. They explain, in writing or orally, how their interpretations represent the emotions.
- When focussing on ancient Rome in Social Studies, students use a flocking activity (see p. 12) to represent the actions of Roman Centurions. As an extension, students add qualities of shape and space to the flocking movements.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate focussed concentration;
- demonstrate thoughtful attention to instructions along with a willingness to explore ways to use the body to express the general rules or ideas of movement (see pp. 8–12).
- perform the actions with energy;
- make meaningful and precise movements;
- use correct movement vocabulary when discussing movement activities;
- explain and defend their movement choices, orally or in writing.

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students with mobility issues can participate by using modified body movements.

## Ceremonies

Students create special ceremonies to remember, celebrate, or take note of events of special significance encountered in their reading. These ceremonies use drama processes previously practised such as choral speech, movement pieces, tableaux, story telling, etc.

In designing a ceremony, students look for deeper meaning, whether they are examining a piece of fiction or applying information gathered from history or science text. They work cooperatively to make decisions about their presentation, which are the important points they wish to include and how they are significant. Students work cooperatively to decide which drama processes are most appropriate to their ceremonies. The ceremony components reflect the theme, tone, and purpose for which the ceremony was designated.

### Links with the Curriculum

Before students create a ceremony, they review and list on chart paper all the drama processes and activities they have practised to date. They can use these skills in designing their ceremony. Elicit examples of ceremonies students know and have possibly participated in. Students identify what makes a ceremony 'special'? (Brainstorm how ceremonies are structured with a definite beginning, middle, and end; often have a master of ceremonies or leader; include everyone, etc.) Discuss ways to use the different processes as a part of a ceremony. Small groups choose one or two drama processes for their part of a ceremony.

Music could enhance the ceremonies. Have on hand a selection of CDs for students to use, if they wish to add music to their presentations. When selecting music to place in a classroom library, consider lesser known music such as world music selections, less familiar classical music (Medieval and Renaissance music works well along with 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century composers such as Robert Moran and Phillip Glass) and instrumental jazz. Students tend to listen to music which is well-known or has identifiable words, rather than react.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- use previously learned drama processes in new situations, creatively and accurately;
- demonstrate collaborative decision-making in planning their part of the ceremony;
- demonstrate the ability to concentrate and focus.

The History curriculum is an appropriate area in which to have students create ceremonies – farewells, first encounters, great discoveries, memorials, peace treaties, and so on. There are equally good places in almost any curriculum for a student-created ceremony: celebrating the discovery of the Pythagorean Theorem, Linnaeus’ categorization of living things, or remembering Beth March from *Little Women*. Ceremonies reflecting an historical context help students develop a deeper understanding of others’ points of view.

## Notes

### Sample Scenarios

- After reading the picture book *Boy of the Deeps* by Ian Wallace, students create a ceremony to celebrate the rescue of the miners.
- While reading Jane Yolen’s picture book *Encounter* during a study of explorers, the teacher stops at the point where the narrator says that two of the chief’s sons were taken away by the strangers. Students create a ceremony of farewell to send them off and give them support and memories to take with them.
- Students choose particular events or materials from the curriculum being studied, and create a ceremony as an alternate culminating activity for a unit or theme.

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students who are not allowed to participate in a ceremony-making activity may contribute to the planning process. They could be responsible for choosing and playing recorded music, creating music, building props, etc. Also, they can act as ‘stage managers,’ organizing the various groups as they perform.
- Students with physical disabilities can contribute with choral speech, tableaux, etc.
- Students with a visual or auditory impairment can work a partner.

# Visual Art Techniques – Introductory Activities

## Colour

Students use a variety of colour media such as finger paint, tempera paint, oil pastels, coloured crayons, and pens to explore the emotional context of colour through colour mixing activities. Colour can enhance understanding of content and reinforce concept skill development. Colours have different significance to different cultures, and may be used to help students understand the actions and motivations of others. Use colour to interpret personal meanings of content, and create mood and emotion.

Discuss metaphors for human emotions which contain colour images, e.g., ‘green with jealousy,’ ‘feeling blue,’ or ‘seeing red.’ Generate a list of these metaphors and discuss why specific colours might be associated with different emotions. Discuss the meanings that different cultures place on certain colours, e.g., in North America, red is a colour associated with anger, but also with patriotism. In other cultures, red is a symbol of regeneration or joy. White can mean purity in North American or death in some Asian cultures.

Ask students to identify their favourite colour(s) and to explain what about the colour is so attractive, e.g., colour choices in design and decorating. Ask students how colours are created, leading them to see that by using only a few basic colours, literally hundreds of colours can be mixed.

## Examples

### Mixing Colours

Provide tempera paint in basic primary colours (red, blue, yellow), secondary colours (orange, green, purple), black, brown, and lots of white. Provide brushes in several sizes, water containers, plastic trays or containers to mix colours, and white paper in full sheets, quarters, and halves.

Students draw three sets of three large squares onto a half sheet of cartridge paper. They paint the first square red and the second square yellow, rinsing their brushes well between colours. Students mix a small amount of red and a small amount of yellow together in a container identify the colour and paint the third square with this colour.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- mix a variety of different colours;
- identify how certain colours impact personally;
- use colour to create a mood and then support choices and ideas, verbally or in writing.

Students circulate and observe the colour in classmate's third squares. Ask: Are they identical? Why not? How many different oranges can be created using only red and yellow? Repeat the activity using red and blue, and yellow and blue.

Students divide larger pieces of paper into at least 12 large free form areas created by intersecting straight or curved lines. They choose any one of the primary or secondary colours and fill each space with a different tint (colour mixed with varying quantities of white) or shade (colour mixed with varying quantities of black). Ask: What effect does mixing white or black have on the original colour? If red stands for 'anger,' how does this change by adding white or black to it?

Students explore many different combinations of colour by dividing a large sheet of paper into multiple spaces, and experimenting with mixing using primary colours, secondary colours, white, black, and brown.

Challenge students to discover brown, using only primary and secondary colours. Ask: What happens when white is added to black or brown?

### **Colours and Feelings**

Explain that just as colour can have different meanings, the way line is used in art can stand for different emotions, e.g., sharp, jagged lines elicit different emotions in the observer than smooth, curved, rounded ones. This gives an interesting effect if the artist chooses a colour which has an emotional contrast with the kind of lines drawn.

Students use a half-sheet of paper and overlapping lines to create 6–8 jagged outlined spaces, or curved outlined spaces, whichever one they believe best describes their current emotional state. Then, using only their favourite pure colour, (mixed with varying amounts of white or black), students fill in the spaces. Ask: What message are you giving about yourself?

### **Colour Lines and Temperature**

Introduce the idea of 'hot' and 'cool' colours. Hot colours are those which are traditionally associated with fire, and cool colours relate to water and land forms. So, reds, yellows, and oranges are traditionally thought of as hot, and blues, greens, and purples are cool.

## **Notes**

There are also cool reds and warm purples, but begin by keeping it simple.

Provide several different colour media: wax crayons, felt markers, oil pastels, and/or pencil crayons. Students fold a half-sheet of paper, using a series of straight, jagged, curved and rounded overlapping lines, to create a design on half the paper. (There should be a variety of shapes, but none of them should be too small to paint neatly.) Students trace the design in pencil onto a piece of tracing paper and copy the same image onto the other half of the paper by turning the tracing paper over and drawing firmly over the pencil lines visible through the paper to create a mirror image of their original design. Students colour one side of their design with only warm colours using their choice of colour medium, and colour the mirror design using cool colours in the same medium.

Students describe their work in terms of emotions or feelings the viewer might get. Students display the work along with a short title, or phrase.

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- Students lacking fine-motor skills can use larger brushes and big spaces to fill on their paper. For some students, using crayons or markers might also be an option. They won't be able to mix colour the way they can with paint, but they will be able to experiment with colour effects.
- Other supports include limiting the number of spaces and using a hand-over-hand approach. Outline spaces for some students in white wax crayon when paint is used, will help create pleasing lines in the work, and promote pride in the finished product.
- Encourage students with colour blindness to experiment with the colours they can see. If students cannot identify any colour at all, they can work with shades of grey.
- Students who have difficulty using words to define a character's state of mind or the atmosphere surrounding an historical event, can create visual and symbolic representations based on colour and explain colour choices.

## Collage

The word collage comes from the French word *colle* (glue). Collages are created from cut paper (either plain paper cut into shapes, or pre-existing images which have been trimmed) layered, overlapped, and glued into place without any background spaces appearing between the images. The images used are thematically related; sometimes words or letters, cut from paper, are included to add more information to the work. Collage work demonstrates neat, carefully trimmed edges; careful gluing (no lifted edges); few or no straight edges on the cut images; and interesting choice and juxtaposition of images.

Collage lends itself to studies of theme, atmosphere, and character, whether fictional or historical/biographical. Collage is useful in helping students identify underlying meaning by thinking symbolically, e.g., illustrating the difference between what a character says and thinks, or demonstrating different view points about an event.

Students complete collage activities to experiment with non-verbal ways to interpret text and content material. They use pre-existing images to illustrate personal responses to a variety of different situations. Provide magazines of all kinds, flyers, wrapping paper, comic books, and other paper products with images, as well as plain paper such as origami paper in a variety of solid colours. Additional supplies include scissors, x-acto knives, cutting boards to use with knives, white glue, yogurt containers, old paint brushes, and a large recycle bin. Keep background paper smaller, rather than larger.

### Examples

#### A First Collage

The teacher reads a short, highly descriptive poem or fiction passage with a strong setting or vividly described character. Point out and underline words or phrases create specific mental images. Refer to personal connections with memories, places, etc.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- find images to illustrate personal responses and impressions of text or music;
- explain how their choices reflect their response;
- demonstrate, through discussion or writing, an understanding of symbol and theme through choice of images.

Construction paper is too heavy.

If the background is too big, students get discouraged with the number of images they need to collect and trim.

Make either an overhead copy or print the passage out onto chart paper so students can follow along.

Provide a collection of pictures cut and trimmed from magazines, images free-cut from coloured or patterned papers, and letters or words from the poem cut from other sources. The images should be of differing sizes, and trimmed to emphasize the shape of the image.

Students find the part of the text to which the pictures refer. Demonstrate how to lay the images onto the background paper, overlapping carefully to hide the background. Some images can be upside-down, some can be split apart, others used as is. Use images that work well together and arrange them in an interesting way before gluing anything down.

Mix white glue with water in a container (about two parts glue to one part water). Use an old paint brush to paint the background paper, lay the image onto the glued background, then brush the surface of the image with watered glue to seal any edges. Glue text on after the pictures are in place. Let the collage dry well and display it next to the sample text. Wash brushes in hot water and dish soap.

Students choose a favourite poem, song lyrics, or other text and create a collage, using the technique.

### **Music Collage**

Play a piece of music the students are unlikely to have heard before – jazz, world music, medieval or renaissance music, and/or contemporary classical pieces. Students should not recognize the music from another context, and that the music not contain text in their native language. Students listen to the music twice, once without talking and once working with a partner to list the images, colours, emotions, etc. the music evokes. Students look for images from magazines, cut images from paper, and find letters or words to illustrate their ideas. Working with partners, students create and display their collages.

### **Collage Response**

Students create a small collage in response to a reading passage. They include information about the passage they are illustrating.

## **Notes**

Remind students to pour left over glue mixture into a tin can or plastic container, not down the drain.

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- Students lacking fine-motor skills could work with a partner who will cut and trim the images chosen by the student.
- Students with vision impairments can use textured papers and other materials such as fabrics, plant fibres, and metallic foils. Each texture represents an emotion or impression.

## Modelling

Modelling is the manipulation of a variety of media such as plasticine, modelling clay, playdough, and/or found objects such as cardboard, paper, to create concrete images of text, content ideas or concepts. Students, particularly those who are uncomfortable expressing themselves in words, can demonstrate their understanding using models. Students can work independently, or with a partner, to create collaborative three-dimensional representations of text.

Students express their understanding in ‘hands-on’ demonstrations, by manipulating modelling materials. They use three-dimensional forms to define meaning for themselves and others.

### Examples

- Begin initial lessons simply. Students work with geometric forms such as cubes, spheres, and pyramids. Emphasize that the goal is not realism but simplified images or forms. Initially focus on topics such as emotions and describe how shape, edges, height, and depth can be used, for example, to contrast anger with joy. (Anger might be shown with sharp edges, pointed extrusions and an overall angular form. Joy might be represented by enclosing space and rounding the edges.)
- In Geometry, students review the qualities of the various polyhedra, by using modelling materials to construct them.
- Read a short descriptive passage from a non-fiction or fiction resource. Groups of three or four, students represent an idea/concept from the reading. For example, after hearing a piece of fiction from Eve Bunting’s book *Fly Away Home*, one student could be responsible for modelling a character’s emotion at that point, another could model a significant element in the setting, and a third could create a talisman for the character.

## Notes

Media vary in cost from very inexpensive (home-made modelling clay made with flour, salt, and cornstarch), to mid-cost (plasticine), to quite expensive (Fimo modelling medium, air-drying clays). Papier mâché, and found materials can also be used to create models. The choice of medium depends on budget, time constraints, and availability of storage (some media require long drying times).

Air-drying clay dries out quickly in small amounts and will crack if it is manipulated too much.

### What to Look For

Students:

- use modelling materials in a thoughtful, careful way and non-wasteful way;
- create simple, solid structures which reflect the chosen topic;
- contribute to the finished piece and each explain their choices, independent of the other when working with partners.

Students with allergies should wear non-latex gloves when modelling.

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students with physical difficulties may need hand-over-hand assistance to experience and use the modelling medium successfully, or work with a partner who would create the model based on verbal descriptions.

## Simple Masks

Using some form of disguise or face covering, students express situations and emotions through body movements. Wearing masks, students are transformed into whatever type of character they would like to be. Students rely on their bodies to portray essential expressions and meanings. Movements are stripped down to the bare essentials. They analyse the 'why' of movement as well as the 'how.'

Often when students begin mask work, they resort to stereotypical movements. Mask work provides opportunities to discuss stereotypes, movements, and how mistaken judgements are often made because of the way people move.

Non-verbal students can be highly descriptive without using language.

Simple masks can be created out of inexpensive white paper plates. Cut out large eyeholes and reshape the bottom of the plate to create an oval that will cover the entire face. Staple elastic onto both sides of the mask to hold it in place.

Costume rental stores also carry simple, plastic masks called 'neutral' masks, in different sizes, and in male and female forms.

### Conventions of Mask Work

- When the mask is being worn, there can be no sound. Simple masks are made without a mouth so the wearer expresses stories through movement, rather than words.
- To put the mask on, stand facing away from the 'audience.' Once the mask is in place, turn around and stand quietly until the story begins.
- When wearing a mask a person's loses personal identity, and the wearer becomes simply 'mask.'
- Turn away from the audience to take the mask off.
- When the mask is removed, put it down with the 'face' pointing up.

The mask wearer must turn quite obviously to see to the side. Encourage students to move slowly and deliberately. It is useful to practise walking around the room while wearing the mask to get used to the limited vision.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- remain silent during the time they are wearing the mask;
- follow the basic conventions of mask work;
- make movements that are large, precise, and exaggerated;
- make use of the entire performance space, and explore different levels such as methods of walking tall, crouched, scurrying, etc.;
- identify specific techniques classmates use, e.g., large movements, use of space, etc.

Use antibacterial wipes to clean the inside of the mask each time it is worn by a different student.

If possible, students work in front of a mirror so that they can see the effect that they are creating while wearing the mask. Students can work in pairs or small groups to observe and offer advice to each other.

If possible, videotape student mask performances, so the students can assess their work.

Once students become comfortable wearing the masks, create a running story for them to act out. Encourage students to use wide expressive gestures without any sound. Observers are responsible for discussing elements of the performance which were successful and which could be improved.

### **Examples**

- Students use masks to act out everyday events such as getting up in the morning, or imaginary events such as witnessing the landing of aliens.
- Students re-enact Science concepts or History events.

### **Notes**

In the interests of safety, students work in small groups and encourage non-performing students to observe their classmates as they move.

## Visual Art Techniques – Curriculum Connections

### Modelling with a Purpose

Students apply skills and techniques developed in earlier modelling activities (see p. 48) and use various media to construct personal interpretations of images or ideas encountered in text.

### Links with the Curriculum

Creating models helps students analyse content; identify main ideas in non-fiction materials; and consider important aspects of character, plot, setting, and theme in fiction materials.

Students analyse text to determine character traits, important setting details, main ideas, etc. and use this analysis to construct models of objects which reflect their understanding. They defend their choices either orally or in writing.

### Sample Scenarios

- The teacher reads the picture book *When Jessie Came Across the Sea* by A. Hest, stopping at the point where Jessie steps onto the ship. In groups, students create representations of objects they think Jessie would have packed in her suitcase. They show their sculptures/models and explain why they think Jessie believed that these items were important enough to bring with her.
- When studying insects, students use models to demonstrate their understanding of metamorphosis after studying about the life cycle of monarch butterflies. Students work in small groups with each student creating a representation of one of the stages in the butterfly's life. The stages are displayed with labels and/or explanations.
- When studying the Klondike Gold Rush, small groups create maps and models of the buildings in a typical gold-rush town. They create biographies or histories for the inhabitants of the buildings, relating their work and lives to the story of the gold rush.

### Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- explicitly defend their choices and models, citing support from text for their decisions;
- demonstrate their understanding of text and context in written work, oral responses, and models.

Students with allergies should wear non-latex gloves when modelling.

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students with physical difficulties may need hand-over-hand assistance to experience and use the modelling medium successfully, or work with a partner who would create the model based on verbal descriptions.

## Mask Making

Students create specific masks for different learning situations. Masks can be made from a variety of inexpensive materials and can be as simple as paper plate masks or as realistic as actual moulds of students' faces. There should be a reason for creating the masks, whether it is to recreate the characters in a story, or to represent a culture and a type of mask making being taught.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students experiment with a variety of mask-making methods, and make decisions about how their interpretation of character influences their depiction of the character. They begin to see how different masks work for different situations, and make choices on which forms are most appropriate for their own project work.

Students use or make different types of masks to create characters. Students work with purchased half-masks which can be embellished with card-stock add-ons (such as noses, beaks, moustaches, etc.), feathers, sequins, buttons, wool, and other found materials to create a specific character.

To make full-face masks, begin with an oval pad of newspaper, corresponding in size to the student's facial measurements; cover the newspaper pad with plastic wrap. Build up facial features and details with plasticine; then, build up several layers of papier mâché or strips of plaster-of-Paris bandage over the plasticine. Once the modelling medium is dry, the mask can be removed from the mould, painted with acrylic paint, and embellished as desired. The mask is held on with wide bands of elastic.

Students could also use make-up to create their masks. Commercially made masks tend to be uncomfortable to wear, stereotypical in design, and can restrict the wearer's vision.

## Notes

In some cultures, masks have a specific significance and should be treated with respect.

### What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate a creative and original use of materials and media in their masks, e.g., employ detail in design;
- avoid stereotypes in showing characters;
- make masks that fit the face, and reflect the character or situation for which they were made.

These masks can be quite heavy, and care must be taken to provide holes for breathing.

## Sample Scenarios

- Students who are studying a particular culture or time period incorporate specific art and design techniques used by that culture. A careful study of the types of lines and colours the culture used are incorporated into the creation of masks to represent that society. Students research and create a certain type of mask, and demonstrate in performance how the mask was used in the culture.
- Students studying *Romeo and Juliet* research Renaissance Italian feasts and dances, then create masks that were used for masquerade balls. They study the differences between the male and female masks, what certain colours represented at the time, and why masks were used. They wear their masks as they recreate the Montague ball. Use Sergei Prokofiev's ballet music "Romeo and Juliet" to enhance the mask performance.

## Notes

If a student comes from a culture which has a tradition of masks and mask-making, the student might have samples he or she is willing to share with the class.

## Creating Artifacts

Students create an artifact or symbol from a text using a variety of media (see pp. 48 and 51).

### Links with the Curriculum

Creating artifacts can be integrated across the curriculum to demonstrate understanding of content.

### Sample Scenarios

- Students studying the ancient Egyptians, create hieroglyphics, stele, or mummies using the information they have learned from texts, lessons, or research. They present their artifacts as part of a museum display, including information cards about their objects.
- While reading the *Island* trilogy, by Gordon Korman, students create symbols from the story – JT’s sunglasses or a log to represent fire. They then explain why these symbols are important to the story and how they relate to symbols in their own lives.
- As enrichment, a group of students could retell an entire novel, or important non-fiction topic using created artifacts.

## Notes

Students with allergies should wear non-latex gloves when modelling.

### What to Look For

Students:

- demonstrate understanding of content and text, e.g., students who have created mummies for their unit on Egypt, write in the role of a ‘Keeper of the Dead;’ and explain the mummification process and its importance to Egyptian society.

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students with physical difficulties may need hand-over-hand assistance to experience and use the modelling medium successfully, or work with a partner who would create the artifact based on verbal descriptions.

## Mixed-Media Collage

Mixed-media collages can incorporate almost any materials which can be glued or fastened to a background. Students create collages with a wide variety of found objects and materials in addition to using paper of various types. Students can also add colour using crayon, felt marker, water colour, oil pastel, coloured pencil, pen/ink, and pencils. The found objects and materials add texture to the overall design and can act symbolically, underlining meaning and interpretation. Students are encouraged to look for ways to use found materials for underlining character traits, emphasizing emotional contexts, and expressing symbolic meanings.

Students can use found materials as a way to express deeper understanding, e.g., if a character is rude and unwelcoming, a mixed-media collage might express that trait through the use of hard materials such as plastics or metals, or through rough textures such as sand paper. Students can demonstrate understanding of setting elements, plot details, and other literary elements through their choice of media for the collage.

### Links with the Curriculum

Students analyse character traits and motivations, define moods and emotions, and visualize important setting elements in fictional works, and determine important facts in non-fiction material. They consider how these elements or facts might be represented symbolically through the use of a variety of found materials. They explain their choices, supporting them with evidence from the chosen texts.

Prepare a wide variety of resources: buttons, bottle caps, small nails, wire of varying thicknesses and colours, plastics, ribbons, feathers, wooden sticks, wools, embroidery floss, string and cord, small toys, gears, etc. Heavy card makes a firm backing for the collages. Use low-heat glue guns to attach heavier materials, and white glue for light-weight materials. Provide oil pastels, pencil crayons, simple tempera paint, wire cutters, and good quality scissors. Students should work in a large scale – 50 cm × 50 cm. Encourage them to choose materials carefully, limiting themselves to only a few types of media.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- justify their media choices in reference to their interpretation of character, motivation, theme, etc., through the use of text clues;
- explain the different levels of meaning they attempted to portray.

## Sample Scenarios

- When studying the diversity of living things, students create mixed-media collages which demonstrate the different classes of animals or plants. They support their choices with captions.
- Students choose a poem demonstrating figurative language and illustrate it using a variety of mixed media. The media chosen reflect or symbolize the various descriptive techniques used in the poem. Students may choose to augment their collages with a choral speech presentation of the poem.
- After studying the novel *The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis, students create portraits of their choice of character, using mixed media to reflect the character's traits, emotions, and physical description. They support their choices with quotes from the novel.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students lacking fine-motor skills may need help in cutting and manipulating their chosen media.
- Students with visual impairments explore a range of tactile possibilities in their collages.

## Drawing Visualizations of Text

Drawing visualizations help students ‘see’ character, setting, events. They use a variety of drawing media to visualize narrative and non-fictional texts. The emphasis is on creating a personal reflection of an imagined place. The drawings focus on effect and not on technique.

Students with language difficulties sometimes have a difficult time remembering what they have read because of their inability to visualize what has been read. Teaching students to visualize text is an important tool in helping them move past the decoding stage into comprehension. There is not a ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ response or approach. Students are not attempting to create ‘realistic’ representations of the chosen image(s).

For students who are visual learners, the act of creating images can help fix information into memory. The use of colour and shape, even if used in an abstract or non-representational way, when applied to the collection of information, can act like a mnemonic device in retrieving data at a later date.

The kinesthetic learner learns best when movement is incorporated into his or her learning. By drawing what they read or hear, students solidify information through creating visual representations. Creating the image acts as a reinforcement and a reminder of the text when revisited at a later date.

### Links with the Curriculum

There are a number of simple techniques which can be easily taught and quickly applied. Students should use a scrap book or a binder with plain paper for their visualizations. Students can draw using any medium, but they must work with the lines they create. If working with paint, students use only large brushes or small sponges as a means of avoiding too much detail.

Begin by reading aloud a text passage which has vivid, descriptive language. Challenge students to use a single continuous line to create an image of what they see in their mind’s eye. The pen travels smoothly around and over the page in a long, flowing line without being lifted from the page. Images overlap, details are missing, but the essence of the text should be there. Once the drawing is finished, students fill the shapes and spaces created with colour, if desired. They add a title and date to their drawings.

## Notes

### What to Look For

Students:

- create a representation of the text;
- describe the emotional context for their visualizations.

Alternatively encourage students to create their text visualizations using only geometric shapes, with each shape standing for a character or setting component. Students fill the entire page, overlapping the shapes to create an abstract visual representation of the text. Colour can be used effectively, either to stand for different characters or for different emotions and feelings experienced. They can add individual words or phrases to the drawing.

Show students examples of graphic novels. Provide simple comic-style cell templates (3, 4, 7, or 10 cells on a page) for students to create their own graphic novel/comic book responses to a text. Elicit from students the characteristics of the graphic novel style, e.g., simple outline, colouring-book style drawings with either speech bubbles or text boxes in each cell, a narrative focus as well as a visual one, and either black-and-white or bold colour.

Students aim for a free and spontaneous style of drawing. Initially, students might feel uncomfortable using drawing this way, since many have a set idea of what ‘drawing’ should look like. Students begin to use the techniques spontaneously to reflect on self-selected texts.

### **Sample Scenarios**

- While reading the section of Glen Huser’s novel *Stitches* where Travis, Chantelle, and Amber perform a puppet show of Peter Pan for their class, students create a visualization of the scene using comic-style cells which highlight the main points.
- When studying the Middle Ages, students use pastels or crayons to create abstract line representations of the excitement of a tournament.
- Using continuous line drawing, students create an initial map of the island in Gordon Korman’s novel trilogy *Island*. They redraw the map as they add more information and label important places and events.

### **Differentiating Instruction**

- Students with some degree of visual impairment can work on a larger scale with felt markers.
- Students with mobility issues might need hand-over-hand assistance.

## Using Colour to Reflect Understanding

Students use a variety of colour media to demonstrate understanding of character, setting, plot, emotion, or non-fiction content in text. Students recall preliminary work done in colour mixing (see pp. 43–45), and the ideas around colour as a type of code for emotions and feelings.

### Links with the Curriculum

Provide a variety of different colour media, including pencil crayons, felt markers, oil pastels, tempera and poster paints, and wax crayons. Plain white paper in various sizes should also be accessible.

While listening to a passage, students use wax crayons or oil pastels to create abstract impressions, emotional responses, or non-representational constructs which reflect the emotional content of the text. For example, students create their impression of the emotional contrast between what a character is saying and what the character is thinking or feeling. Students should not sketch their ideas first, but work ‘cold’ using only the crayons. They can add a title or words and phrases after the work is complete. Initially, provide some guidance about what to listen for in the text.

The teacher reads a highly descriptive poem, one which uses a lot of figurative imagery. As they listen, students use pencil crayons and markers to ‘illustrate’ the poem. Students choose colours to best represent the feelings or ideas of the poem. Using only sponges dipped in paint, students create physical and/or emotional landscapes/settings based on self-selected text. Discourage pre-drawing. Add descriptive phrases around the edges of the work.

## Notes

Cartridge paper works well as it has more body for paint.

### What to Look For

Students:

- identify the reasons certain colours were chosen;
- reflect an understanding of the symbolism of colour in their representations.

## Sample Scenarios

- When studying the opening of the Canadian West, students create colour portraits of Louis Riel, John A. MacDonald, Chief Poundmaker, Gabriel Dumont, or any other person involved in this time period. The colours used to complete the portrait should not be 'realistic,' but instead reflect the feelings the character had about particular events in his (or her) life. For example, a portrait of Louis Riel could contain colours which reflect his heritage, his emotions about being exiled, his mental instability, and his fear before his execution. Words printed around the edges of the portrait recall important events for the character represented.
- As enrichment, students create a series of colour interpretations, using either an abstract or a realistic format, of a character's growth/emotions/relationships throughout an entire novel, providing information about the symbolism of the colours used through quotes and examples from the text.

## Notes

### Differentiating Instruction

- Students lacking fine-motor control can use larger brushes, and crayons or markers.

# Sample Checklist for Tableau

Students participating in this tableau: \_\_\_\_\_

Silence maintained by:

All	Most	Some	Few
-----	------	------	-----

Frozen postures maintained by:

All	Most	Some	Few
-----	------	------	-----

Active participation demonstrated by:

All	Most	Some	Few
-----	------	------	-----

Focus/concentration maintained by:

All	Most	Some	Few
-----	------	------	-----

Facial expressions demonstrated by:

All	Most	Some	Few
-----	------	------	-----

Identifiable characters depicted by:

All	Most	Some	Few
-----	------	------	-----

Levels depicted:

Very low	Low	Middle	High	Very high
----------	-----	--------	------	-----------

Centre of Focus:

Yes	No
-----	----

Identifiable Scene:

Yes	No
-----	----

Something that was done well in this tableau is:

Something that would make this tableau more effective is:

# Sample Self-Assessment for Student-in-Role

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role \_\_\_\_\_

Assess your performance in-role by giving yourself a number from **1** to **4** for each of these characteristics of role playing

**1** = not very much

**2** = at least half of the time

**3** = more than half of the time

**4** = almost all the time

When I was in-role...

I spoke using my character's voice and vocabulary.	1	2	3	4
I moved the way my character would move.	1	2	3	4
I listened carefully to what other students were saying so that I could maintain the storyline when I responded.	1	2	3	4
I supported the other students by staying focussed and on task.	1	2	3	4
I contributed to the dialogue which took place.	1	2	3	4
I was considerate of others and moved in a safe way.	1	2	3	4

Something I think I did well in this role-play was:

Something I would like to work on next time we do a role-play is:

The part I like best about this role-play was:

Something I didn't expect was:

# Sample Peer Feedback for a Neutral Mask Presentation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

The name of the person I was observing: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Put a check mark beside all the mask conventions this person followed.

Stood with back to audience before putting on mask	
Did not talk during his/her performance	
Used his/her body to show emotions and reactions	
Stood with back to audience before taking off mask	
Put mask down with the face side up	

2. Put a check mark beside the best ways to describe how this person moved his/her body when performing. (You can check more than one phrase.)

Did not move very much at all	
Moved, but did not look that different from moving without a mask	
Moved, but did not have much energy in his/her movements	
Moved with energy and purpose	
Moved with big, exaggerated movements	
Stood in one spot most of the time	
Moved around the performance area sometimes	
Moved around the performance area a lot	

3. Did the performer's movements demonstrate the story being told by the narrator?

**Yes**

**No**

**Sometimes**

4. Something I really like about this performance was:

5. Something this performer could work on next time is:

## Teacher Resources

- Booth, David and Masayuki Hachiya, (eds.) *The Arts Go To School*.  
Markham: Pembroke Publishers, 2004.
- Booth, David and Charles J. Lundy. *Improvisation: Learning Through Drama*.  
Toronto: Harcourt Canada, 1985.
- Crawford, Linda. *Lively Learning: Using the Arts to Teach the K–8 Curriculum*.  
Greenfield: Northeast Foundation for Children, 2004.
- Heller, Paul G. *Drama as a Way of Knowing*. York, Maine: Stenhouse, 1995.
- King, Carol and Deborah Castle. *The Rabbits, A Drama Unit*.  
Available from [carolaking@earthlink.net](mailto:carolaking@earthlink.net)
- Ladousse, Gillian Porter. *Role Play*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Neelands, Jonothan. *Beginning Drama 11–14*. London: David Fulton Publishers, 2004.
- Neelands, Jonothan and Tony Goode. *Structuring Drama Work*.  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Pomer, Janice. *Perpetual Motion*. Windsor: Human Kinetics, 2002.
- Russell, Steve. *Getting Assessment Right: Drama Grades 9–10*.  
Barrie: Data Based Directions, 2003.

## Literature Cited

- Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women*. New York: Aladin Classics, 2000.
- Brenner, Barbara, ed. *Voices: Poetry and Art from Around the World*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2000.
- Bunting, Eve. *Fly Away Home*. New York: Clarion Books, 1991.
- . *Riding the Tiger*. New York: Clarion Books, 2001.
- Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*. New York: Bantam Doubleday, 1995.
- Fleischman, Paul. *Big Talk: Poems for Four Voices*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2000.
- Granfield, Linda. *Where Poppies Grow: A World War I Companion*. Markham: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001.
- Heidbreder, Robert. *Drumheller Dinosaur Dance*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2004.
- Hest, A. *When Jessie Came Across the Sea*. New York: Scholastic, 1999.
- Huser, Glen. *Stitches*. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2003.
- Innocenti, Roberto. *Rose Blanche*. Mankato, Minn: Creative Editions, 1985.
- Koje, Kathe. *Buddha Boy*. New York: The Penguin Group, 2003.
- Korman, Gordon. *Island*. New York: Scholastic, 2001.
- Marsden, John. *Prayer for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: Star Bright Books, 1998.
- . *The Rabbits*. New York: Simply Read Books, 2003.
- McKibbon, Hugh William. *The Token Gift*. Toronto: Annick Press, 1996.
- Montgomery, Lucy Maud. *Anne of Green Gables*. London: Seal Books, 1996.
- Philbrick, Rodman. *Freak the Mighty*. New York: Scholastic, 1993.
- Shakespeare, William, retold by Bruce Coville. *Midsummer Night's Dream*. New York: Puffin Books, 1996.
- Shakespeare, William, retold by Margaret Early. *Romeo and Juliet*. New York: Abrams, 1998.
- Smith, Charles R. Jr. *Rimshots: Basketball Pics, Rolls, and Rhythms*. New York: Puffin Books, 2000.
- . *Short Takes: Fast-break Basketball Poetry*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2001.
- Wallace, Ian. *Boy of the Deeps*. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1999.
- Yolen, Jane. *Encounter*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1996.